



# service source

## NEW JERSEY'S NATIONAL AND COMMUNITY SERVICE PROGRAM AND POLICY REVIEW

NEW JERSEY COMMISSION ON NATIONAL AND COMMUNITY SERVICE  
NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION, BUREAU OF COMMUNITY SERVICES

October 2001

Volume V Number 1

### LIFE AFTER AMERICORPS

People serve in AmeriCorps for a variety of reasons. They want to give back to the community, help others, or exemplify an ethic of service. AmeriCorps also serves as a stepping stone for young people who may be looking for a career but need some time to make the final decision before or after college or before entering the workforce. AmeriCorps gives people an opportunity to serve in a setting that will give them experience in education, the environment, public safety, or human services. It is a chance to gain experience, while providing a service to the community.

New Jersey AmeriCorps members have found excellent jobs as a result of their service experience. Eight corpsmembers, who served last year with **NJ Watershed Ambassadors in DEP**, obtained jobs in New Jersey working in the field of water resources. Some of these positions were in the watershed areas where they had served. One corpsmember will attend Duke

University for a masters degree in professional environmental management.

Two second-year corpsmembers with **A+ For Kids** obtained employment at schools served by the program. One is a paraprofessional at Gregory School in Trenton and the other is a parent liaison at the Columbus Street School in Trenton.



Four Corpsmembers at **NJCommunity Development Corporation** in Paterson were hired by their AmeriCorps sites as staff members. Two corpsmembers have chosen teaching as a career and one member joined the Peace Corps. Four members are going on to graduate school, one is entering law school and one is attending community college.

*Continued on page 5*

### IN THE SPOTLIGHT



Dr. Anthony Campbell, a member of the NJ Commission, currently serves as the Associate Vice President of Student Affairs and Dean of Students at Rider University in Lawrenceville, New Jersey. Tony received his Ph.D. in Counselor Education from the University of Virginia. Service has been a priority for Tony since high school. He has served as a volunteer at a treatment facility for juveniles and as a member of numerous community agency boards. Under Tony's leadership, the University and the Bonner Foundation established the Rider Community Scholars AmeriCorps program. Tony states, "Service and volunteerism are how people of good will share their talents and gifts to solve the problems of our communities."



## TRAINING UPDATE

### Proposed Training Activities and Special Events, November 2001 – June 2002:

- **Service Assignment Training** (Members/optional attendance) **Nov.-Mar.**  
  
**Tutor Training** (to be done at sites by staff, Commission will assist to extent possible)  
  
**Youth Service Leaders *Fall* Retreat** **Nov. 8-10**  
**Education, Youth Development and Human Service Needs Topics\*** **Nov. 30**  
(Include Reporting Child Abuse, Teaching Science/Envir., and LEARNS LLAP Tool  
Training for Managers)  
**Environmental Education Conference (ANJEE)** **Jan. 11-12**  
**Arts & Education/State Theatre Workshops** **TBD**
- **Diversity Training (Includes Disabilities Awareness)** **Jan. 18 - Calvin**  
**Jan. 25**  
**Feb. 8**  
**Feb. 22 - Calvin**
- **Statewide Professional Development Day (all Corpsmembers)** **Mar. 22**  
Career *Trends* Information Workshops (education, health, technology, human services,  
etc./survey members) Resume Writing, Interviewing Skills, Public Speaking, Time Man-  
agement, Professional Development Mentors and True Colors (Keys to Personal Success  
character assessment), *Motivational Speaker*
- **NJ National Service Conference** **May 9-10**  
**(Tentative)**

\* *Specific workshops to be determined per survey results*

#### New Initiative Recommendations

- **Bi-monthly Program Manager Meetings:**  
Suggested Training Topics: Developing Member Career Plans, Raising Project Funds,  
Grants Review and Writing, Project Initiatives such as V-Free Grants
- Ongoing Technical Assistance with available and appropriate Commission Staff and CNS  
T/TA Providers. Possible TA needs: WBRs Training/Program Measurement Tools,

*continued on page 3*

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## TRAINING UPDATE

*continued from page 2*

- Developing Outcome-based Goals and Evaluation Tools, Staff Management and Program Administration Coaching, etc.
- Program Peer Exchange and Joint Training Meetings. State Commission may provide training assistance for joint training sessions. Suggested topics: Conflict Resolution, Organizing Community Clean-ups and other activities, Basic First Aid, and various cultural and speakers bureau topics. Encourage member peer exchange programs and projects. State Commission will assist to extent possible. Peer Exchange initiatives are to be reported to the State Commission for informational purposes.
- Provide training opportunities through State Theatre and other organizations, as appropriate.

### National Service Days

**Make-A-Difference Day**

**MLK Day of Service**

**National Service Week**

**Oct. 27**

**Jan. 14**

**TBD (April)**



## WHAT'S NEW IN AMERICORPS?

The NJ Commission welcomes back the **Urban League of Hudson County**. The corpsmembers will serve as caregivers, tutors, and

mentors in two day care centers and one charter school. We are pleased to once again work with Ms. Elnora Watson and her excellent staff.



## DISABILITY AND DIVERSITY

New Jersey AmeriCorps programs have successfully integrated corpsmembers who have disabilities.

**The Bonner Leaders' Program** recruited a corpsmember with a developmental disability to serve at the food pantry, which is an AmeriCorps site. The young man and his family had approached the director of the food pantry independently and asked if he could volunteer for a few hours a week. He did so well, that after several weeks, the director asked the AmeriCorps program manager to bring him on as a part-time corpsmember. He now serves 20 hours a week, performs well, and works independently with little supervision. He is so delighted with AmeriCorps that he says he wants to transfer to a program near the special college program he will be attending in the fall.

**The New Jersey Community Development Corporation** recruited a young woman with a developmental disability to take charge of the day program for clients

with mental and developmental disabilities. She assisted them with occupational training, including stuffing envelopes, arts and crafts, and celebrating special events. She said, "When the clients got a lot of work done and made more money, we were all happy. I always like to help people because they are so great."

**The Digital Divide Program at Monmouth County Vocational Rehabilitation (MCVR)** is a unique program that has a complement of corpsmembers with disabilities serving clients with disabilities. The ten corpsmembers have a range of disabilities that include physical, visual and mental. After six months of training



on basic computer skills, they will begin training participants with disabilities from MCVR and from the community. Special software programs are used to accommodate corpsmembers, such as JAWS for members



who are blind and ZoomText for members with lower visual acuity. A corpsmember with cerebral palsy uses a modified track ball.

**New Jersey Youth Corps in Burlington County** operates out of the Burlington County Special Services School. In addition to recruiting corpsmembers with disabilities, they get things done by building access ramps and renovating housing for people with disabilities.

***Congratulations to all of you who have made the extra effort to accommodate people with disabilities as an integral part of your programs.***



We are also pleased to welcome a new National Direct program, **Arc/Mercer, Inc.** The program provides education and human services for persons with developmental disabilities. Corpsmembers will work in residential, vocational, adult, and children's services programs to promote community integration and inclusion. They will also help expand the curriculum in the Arc Institute, a trade school.

The Service Source is available in alternate format upon request.

## AMERICORPS ACCOMPLISHMENTS



In July, NJCDC in Paterson took the corpsmembers to Washington, D.C. for three days where they toured monuments, museums and the U.S. Capitol building. They also met with their Congressman and discussed current policy issues with him.

**NJ Reads!** served over 180 children who were considered "at-risk" readers in five schools in Cumberland County, NJ. Americorps members participated in events such as Dr. Seuss's and Arthur's birthday to promote reading, as well as helping with evening literacy events at our various service sites.



**A+ For Kids** ran a summer reading camp at Columbus School in Trenton for 52 students enrolled from various schools throughout Mercer County. The students read two books a week and completed a book report for each book read. All the students met the goal and also enjoyed field trips to Mercer County Park for a picnic, a Thunder game, the Franklin Institute in Philadelphia and a visit to Sesame Place, Langhorne, PA.

**JJC Junior Mentor Program** held a youth summit on July 26, 2001 at Rutgers University. The purpose was to make the community and the residents in the Juvenile Justice programs aware of AmeriCorps. Approximately 130 people attended. Anthony Bland, program officer for the NJ Commission, spoke on giving back to the community. An alumnus from Junior Mentors spoke about his experiences.

**NJ READS at Kean University** collaborated with the National School and Community Corps on a summer enrichment program. About 125 students participated in an educational component working on reading comprehension. The program included a trip to Dorney Park in Pennsylvania. Corpmembers also ran an eight-week summer school program at Evergreen School in Plainfield. Teachers were very enthusiastic about the program and praised corpsmembers.

*continued on page 6*

## MEET THE PROGRAM MANAGER

**Wentford Gaines** has served with AmeriCorps as a program manager for the Urban League of Hudson County and the NJ Reads program at Kean University. Now he has returned to this position with the Urban League. Mr. Gaines, formerly a professional football player with the Pittsburgh Steelers and the Chicago Bears, received a bachelor's degree in Health Care Administration from the University of Cincinnati. This proud father has twin sons, age 16, who are star players on their high school football team.

Mr. Gaines worked as an administrator in a foster home and two residential treatment centers for children with drug and emotional problems. He is pursuing a master's degree in public administration at New Jersey City University. He states, "I feel that volunteer work and community service are very important and I feel that everyone should be given the opportunity to serve, especially with young children. At that age, children need appropriate role models as opposed to images they may see on television or on street corners."



## AMERICORPS ACCOMPLISHMENTS

*Continued from page 3*

**St. Pauls CDC** in Paterson feeds 1200 families a month through their food pantry. Ten corpsmembers pack and distribute the food. They also have a donated van to transport the elderly and people with disabilities to the food pantry to obtain food.

Julie Ann Zoleta, a corpsmember with **Watershed Ambassadors**, says that during the winter, she did more service indoors. So, in addition to reaching out to environmental associations, she reached out to schools, Boys and Girls Clubs, Girl Scouts and Boy Scouts about presenting watershed demos to students and youth groups. She hopes that these various connections are previews to a good future for Watershed Ambassadors.

### ***Students Praise Watershed Model Presentation***

One of the most rewarding aspects of being a **Watershed Ambassador** is giving EnviroScape demonstrations to school children. Not only are these future policy makers being educated on watershed

issues, but they're having fun with it, too! Here are a few letters from a third-grade class in New Providence, after being educated about watershed 6, which proves that learning about non-point source water pollution can be a lot of fun:

*Dear AmeriCorps Representative,*

*Thank you for telling all about the Great Swamp. I had fun spraying the [manure]. The model of the town was great. The hurricane looked a lot like a hurricane. The pollution you used looked real. I will like to do it again. Thank you so much for saving some time for all of us.*



*From,  
Brian*

*Dear AmeriCorps Representative,*

*I liked being in your group. It was fun. I liked squirting water on the village. The model of the city was cool! It was very nice of you to come and help us.*

*Your friend, Bianca*

**New Jersey Community Water Watch** hosted its first Statewide Streamwalk Day, at seven sites across New Jersey on Saturday, March 31, 2001. Corpsmembers and 200 volunteers educated the community about the poor quality of their waterways and taught them how to monitor their waterways using chemical test kits. They mapped a waterway for pollution sources and cleaned up the trash around each waterway. At two of the sites, volunteers found illegal dumping and are currently working with local officials to stop these activities.



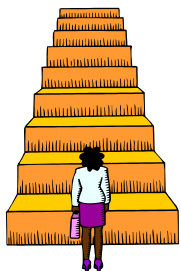
**Bonner Foundation** corpsmembers at Middlesex County College who work at a local soup kitchen administered a needs survey for the people who receive services and food. They discovered that many people who eat at the soup kitchen had jobs during the day and were going without lunch. The students implemented a brown bag lunch program for people to pick up in the morning.

## CORPSMEMBER REFLECTIONS



"This AmeriCorps program is an excellent way to provide the community with an extremely valuable service, learn different approaches to watershed management, further environmental causes, and make contacts with some of the most pre-eminent environmental advocates in the state."

*Jessica Milose  
NJ Watershed  
Ambassadors*



"Give yourself fully to your endeavors. Decide to construct your character through excellent actions and determine to pay the price of a worthy goal. The trials you encounter will introduce you to your strengths."

*Erich Schramm  
NJ Watershed  
Ambassadors*

"The kids have adjusted to my presence and even though I have only been here three days they already like me. I never knew this type of work could be so much fun....I think I am really going to enjoy this..."

*Angel Soberal NJ  
READS, Cumberland*



"AmeriCorps allowed me the opportunity to establish a relationship with my community that strengthened us both. My experiences genuinely impacted my personal growth and development as I saw that my service did the same for others."

*Erin McGrath  
Bonner Leaders*



### LIFE AFTER AMERICORPS

*continued from page 1*

Two corpsmembers in the **Cumberland County College NJ READS** program are studying education at Rowan University. Three members plan to pursue education degrees after completing Cumberland County College.

**Junior Mentors** announced that one corpsmember is attending Essex County College for business. Another corpsmember will be working this year as a security guard to put aside money to study to become a child-care provider. A third corpsmember is moving to the NJ Youth Corps Emergency Medical Technician program in preparation for a career in the medical field.

One of the corpsmembers in the **Bonner Leaders** program has been hired by Rider University as the service-learning coordinator. As part of her duties, she will also be coordinating the Bonner Leader's AmeriCorps program at the university.

## SERVICE-LEARNING NEWS



Up to 100 middle schools and high schools across the country received Presidential recognition this school year through the National Service-Learning Leader Schools program. Sponsored by the Corporation for National Service, the Leader Schools initiative recognizes outstanding schools that have successfully combined academics with service to the community.

To become a National Service-Learning Leader School, a school must apply to a state-level review panel that selects the state's national finalists. Each finalist prepares a portfolio demonstrating its excellence in service-learning, which is screened by a national peer review panel. Recognized schools receive a banner, an invitation to Washington, D.C. for educational workshops and a recognition event, and access to service-learning resources to support the Leader Schools network and to advance service-learning as a teaching, learning, and community-building strategy.

The National Service-Learning Leader Schools program is administered by the Corporation for National Service, which provides Americans of all ages with opportunities to improve communities through programs such as AmeriCorps, Learn and Serve America, and the National Senior Service Corps.

This year, ten New Jersey schools have been recognized for this national honor. The New Jersey schools named this year as National Service-Learning Leader Schools are as follows:

- Benedictine Academy, Elizabeth
- Christa McAuliffe Middle School, Jackson
- Delsea Regional High School, Franklinville
- Hoboken Charter School, Hoboken
- Iselin Middle School and Iselin Middle Township High School, Cape May Court House
- North Arlington Middle School, North Arlington
- Notre Dame High School, Lawrenceville
- Ocean County Vocational-Technical School, Toms River
- West Brook Middle School, Paramus



“Service-learning not only helps foster civic responsibility, it helps young people learn more about language arts, social studies, and other subjects while making a valuable difference in their communities,” states Commissioner of Education, Vito A. Gagliardi, Sr. “We are very proud that New Jersey leads the nation with ten awardees.”



# **NEWS FROM THE CORPORATION FOR NATIONAL AND COMMUNITY SERVICE**

October 2, 2001

Dear Colleagues:

As the new fiscal year begins, I would like to thank you for your hard work over the past year. The progress we have made in communities across the nation - and internally in our organizations -- has been outstanding, and you should be proud of what you have accomplished. I also would like to let you know about several recent developments that are of particular importance to the family of national and community service.

First, our programs continue to be involved in relief and recovery efforts following the September 11 terrorist attacks. Most recently, 132 AmeriCorps\*NCCC members have been deployed to a new, toll-free hotline created by the American Red Cross. Members are serving around the clock at the 1-866-GET INFO hotline in Virginia, providing compassion and support to people with questions and concerns related to the tragedy.

This is one of many examples of programs in all streams of service -- AmeriCorps, Senior Corps and Learn and Serve America -- that are taking action in the wake of the disaster. To learn more about what programs are doing, and to tell us about your efforts, visit the America Responds section of <http://nationalservice.org>. This section also has guidance for AmeriCorps\*State/National and AmeriCorps\*VISTA programs on how members can assist in disaster relief efforts.

Wendy Zenker, Acting Chief Executive Officer,  
Corporation for National and Community Service

## **NJ AMERICORPS PROGRAM SUPPORTS THE RESCUE EFFORT**

On September 14, 2001, AmeriCorps members of the Digital Divide at the Career Institute of Union County College, volunteered at the Community Food Bank in Hillside. Motivated with the need to make an effort to help in this horrific time, members spent the day sorting and packing food that would be taken to New York to feed rescue workers and others assisting with the task of sorting through the debris of the Twin Towers. In a huge warehouse filled with food donations, the Digital Divide members worked with other volunteers to reinforce the AmeriCorps commitment to strengthen the community and to take action during times of need. To further illustrate the AmeriCorps tradition of caring and service, all members have decided to continue volunteering at the Food Bank as long as needed.



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**TO:**

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